THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Government has issued licences for operation of basic telephone services to two private operators apart from Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in Rajasthan. All operators are free to deploy any technology including Wireless in Local Loop (WLL), for provision of the services to their customers and offer various facilities. Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) provides for faster roll out. According to information available, out of a total of 258, such systems have already been installed in 121 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs), which are typically Tehsils. At present, the service based on Wireless Local Loop systems is available in 38 SDCAs to the consumers. The systems that have been installed in the balance SDCAs will be commissioned after successful completion of interconnection tests. Further, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has drawn up plans to provide WLL system in 140 SDCAs by 2003-2004. Some of these SDCAs would also be covered by private basic telephone service operators.

(c) As described above, WLL system is already available in several SDCAs of Rajasthan.

Operation of International Gateway at Guwahati

*500. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) when the international gateway for Internet was inaugurated by VSNL at Guwahati;

(b) the hours during which the gateway remained operational till December, 2002 since its inception;

(c) the reasons for interrupted connectivity/non-operation of the gateway and the action taken to rectify the same;

(d) whether this connectivity is still being provided through BSNL's leased optic fibre from Kolkata to Guwahati;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the alternative channel thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The International Gateway of VSNL at Guwahati was inaugurated on 20th August, 2000. According to VSNL, this Gateway was primarily meant for meeting International Private Lease Circuit (IPLC) requirement of software houses, call centres etc. This Gateway was not used for providing International Internet connectivity.

(b) and (c) VSNL has reported that the gateway of VSNL at Guwahati is in operating condition since its inception.

(d) to (f) Internet connectivity to Internet Point of Presence (PoP) of VSNL at Guwahati is being provided through BSNL leased link between Kolkata and Guwahati.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Working in CBI

†3557. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees in CBI alongwith the number of vacant posts;

(b) whether it is a fact that good and efficient personnel do not want to come on deputation or through any other means in CBI;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and what would be its impact on efficiency and working of CBI; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to increase efficiency of CBI by providing facilities to its employees and to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) As on 1.4.2003, against a sanctioned strength of 5920, there were 4943 employees in position with 977 vacant posts.

(b) to (d) Except for the posts of Deputy Superintendents of Police and Inspectors, the response of eligible officers to the recruitment initiatives has been encouraging. Poor response for these two categories may be attributed to better pay and promotion avenues in the State Governments

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.